

REMARKS

Claims 1-25 are pending. Claims 10-25 stand withdrawn from further consideration as being directed to a non-elected species. Claim 1 is amended hereby.

Claims 1, 2, 4, 5 and 7-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Echigo et al. Favorable reconsideration of this rejection is requested in view of the amendments made herein.

Claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the biasing member comprises a pair of coil springs, wherein each of the coil springs has one end engaged with a corresponding one of both ends of the pressing roller. In Echigo et al., the coil spring 25 is not attached to an end of the pressing roller. Accordingly, Echigo et al. fails to anticipate the currently claimed invention.

Claims 1 and 3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Moriya. Favorable reconsideration of this rejection is respectfully requested.

In Moriya, the coil springs is not attached to an end of the pressing roller. Accordingly, Moriya fails to anticipate the presently pending claims.

Claims 1-4 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) as being anticipated by Hamada et al.

Hamada et al. does not qualify as prior art under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) due to the identical inventorship of the present application and Hamada et al. A Declaration under 37 C.F.R. §1.132 is attached showing that the English translation of the inventor can be either Higashi or Azuma.

Amendment
Application No. 10/691,548
Attorney Docket No. 032010

The executed declaration of Mr. Higashi will be filed as soon as it is received by the undersigned attorney.

Claim 6 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Echigo et al. in view of Matsushige. Favorable reconsideration is earnestly requested.

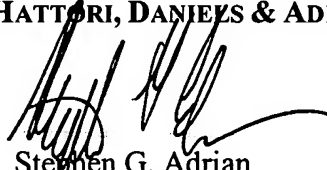
The combination of Echigo et al. and Matsushige fails to teach or suggest the structure set forth in the currently pending claims. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner deem that any further action by applicants would be desirable to place the application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone applicants' undersigned attorney.

If this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees that may be due with respect to this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,

WESTERMAN, HATTORI, DANIELS & ADRIAN, LLP

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen G. Adrian', is written over the printed name.

Stephen G. Adrian
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SGA/arf
Attachment: Declaration under 37 C.F.R. §1.132 (unexecuted)